



THE CITY OF  
**CALGARY**

Utilities & Environmental  
Protection

# **Rounding up the Resources**

**Changing the Wild West**

**Presented by Dave Griffiths, P. Eng**

**The City of Calgary**

**Waste & Recycling Services**

## Changing the Wild West

- Understanding the past
- Planning for the future
- Supporting our community



## Utilities & Environmental Protection

### The Early Years of 'garbage'



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#### The early days...

We are moving from being reactionary to planning our future.

- Backyard burning
- Sanitation issues
- Health driven solutions

The early days in waste management was challenging to say the least. Sustainability and the thought of our impact on the environment was minimal. It was a matter of just get rid of it...shoot, shovel and shut up...oh wait that was the 2000's? Maybe it was more a matter of burn, bury and look the other way.

In the 1880's Calgary had a population of just over 500 people. The focus of 'waste management' was to provide clean outhouses and collect the waste off the streets and public spaces. It was also during this time that sanitary waste (as my colleague from water referred to) was separated from solid waste problem. BURNING waste the 'way to go'. Uncontrolled burning of garbage by residents, fear of fires and air pollution pushed council to built incinerators (burning of waste in a 'controlled' manner) on the east and west end of the city. NIMBYism towards incinerators – pollution. Gave way to BURY phase...

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### Organizing in the 60's & 70's...



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#### The 60's and 70's....

- Environmental challenges – amount of waste
- Collection services

We have a collection system in place.

The mid 1900's saw the emergence of landfill sites and a formalized collection – similar to today, but very different in materials and consumption. “Who is picking up my 22 bags of garbage this week?” The emergence of our more modernized system came into play. Concerns with the long term liability of landfill sites becomes more evident including Landfill gas recovery & energy production, Stormwater management, Leachate collection and pretreatment facilities, Expanded monitoring networks, Risk management activities

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### Towards the millennium...roots of change



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- Not considered garbage anymore – move towards waste management and waste as a resource
- Source separation
- Processing
- Started in mid-80's – Sanitation department
- Will never forget the parting words from the previous Director...
- Change was in our midst. It was happening across Canada:  
**EXAMPLES**
  - Edmonton only had 2 yrs of landfill space left
  - Blue box program started in Ontario
  - SWANA – Gov't Sanitary Refuse Collection & Disposal Assoc.
  - No RCA yet
- Today we are organized with annual conferences discussing change in our systems. Congrats to the RCA board

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### Today...waste as a resource



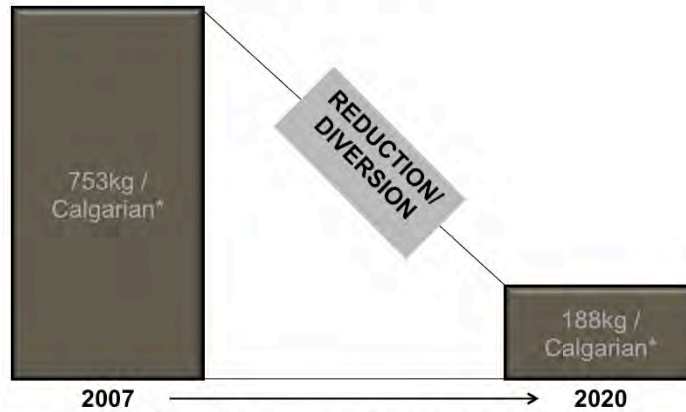
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**Today** we consider Waste as a resource and are trying to find more ways to divert and use waste in such ways that it enhances our environment and our economy.

- Landfills increasingly operating to divert materials
- Organics & Biosolids

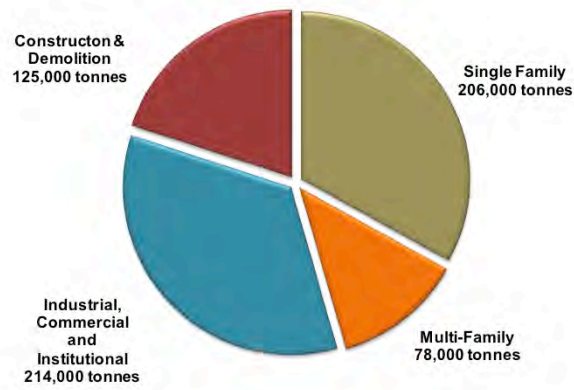
## Waste to Landfill



\*Waste to landfill refers to waste coming from all sectors to City-owned landfills  
(kgs of waste disposed in City landfills)

2012 = 556kg/capita

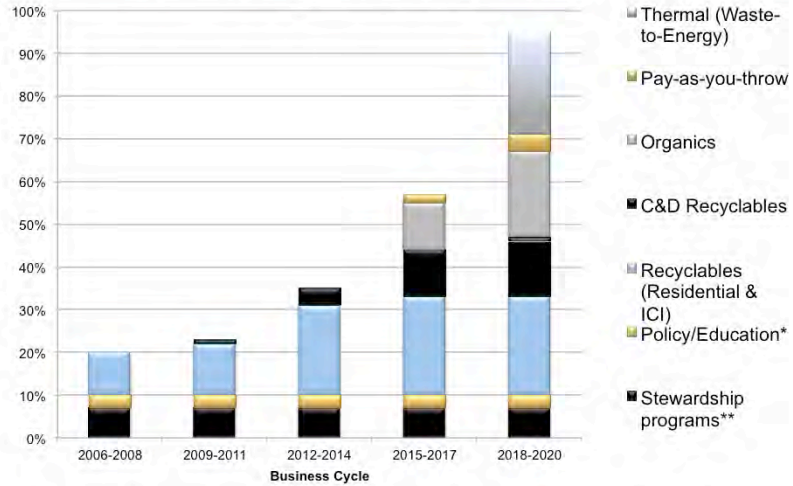
## Our sector approach





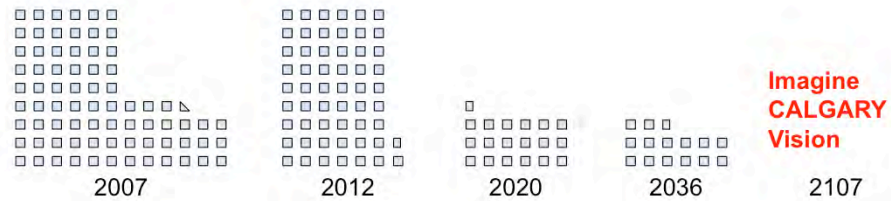
# Utilities & Environmental Protection

Activities to get to 80/20 by 2020 Goal



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### Planning for the future ...



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We are not only planning for 2020 – we are also working with our community vision and goals as portrayed in imagineCALGARY - 85% diversion of waste by 2036 and zero waste by 2107. These goals guide us toward building better systems to support Calgarians in their diversion efforts.

2036 = 85%

2107 = zero waste

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### Responding to crisis



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What happened WRS when the flood event struck Calgary?

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### The impact...

- Nearly 100,000 tonnes of waste
- Over 25,000 loads



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- 98,600 tonnes of flood waste
- 24,187 loads
- HHW

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### Supporting the community....



- Extended landfill hours and Redeployment of staff
- Tipping fees waived
- Reassignment of collection trucks to respond to disaster which meant that a service had to be delayed.
- Recycling program temporarily suspended
- Separation of household hazardous waste, large appliances and electronics

### The road ahead...the next frontier



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How do we plan our future? Moving towards a more sustainable Calgary!!

What have we learned (progressing into the future):

- Primary focus was health based
- Recognized environmental impact
- Rounding up our resources



**Happy Trails!**

**Questions?**